

A preliminary amendment was filed on June 21, 2001. It is respectfully requested that the Examiner acknowledge that the preliminary amendment of June 21, 2001, has been entered, and that the present preliminary remarks have been considered.

As discussed on page 12 of the IDS of March 21, 2001, the publication dates of Japanese references 2-302974 (December 14, 1990) and 3-30007 (February 8, 1991) cited in the IDS of March 21, 2001, are before the effective U.S. filing date of November 27, 1991, of the present application, and are before the filing date of March 5, 1991, of Japanese priority application No. 3-38385 of the present application, but are after the filing date of November 28, 1990, of Japanese priority application No. 2-331554 of the present application.

As discussed on pages 12-13 of the IDS of March 21, 2001, the publication date of Japanese reference 3-108178 (May 8, 1991) cited in the IDS of March 21, 2001, is before the effective U.S. filing date of November 27, 1991, of the present application, but is after the filing date of March 5, 1991, of Japanese priority application No. 3-38385 of the present application, and is after the filing date of November 28, 1990, of Japanese priority application No. 2-331554 of the present application.

As indicated in the claim for priority of March 21, 2001, and as discussed on page 13 of the IDS of March 21, 2001, certified copies of Japanese priority application Nos. 2-331554 and 3-38385 of the present application were filed on August 4, 1993, in application Serial No. 07/799,143 filed on

November 27, 1991, the grandparent application of the present divisional application.

Pursuant to 37 CFR 1.55(a)(4) and MPEP 201.15, submitted herewith are English translations of Japanese priority application Nos. 2-331554 and 3-38385 of the present application, including statements that the English translations are accurate, to perfect the applicants' claim for priority.

Accordingly, as discussed on page 13 of the IDS of March 21, 2001, Japanese references 2-302974 and 3-30007 cited in the IDS of March 21, 2001, are not available as references against any claims of the present application which are supported by Japanese priority application No. 2-331554 of the present application, and Japanese reference 3-108178 cited in the IDS of March 21, 2001, is not available as a reference against any claims of the present application which are supported by at least one of Japanese priority application Nos. 2-331554 and 3-38385 of the present application.

As discussed on page 14 of the IDS of March 21, 2001, the publication dates of Japanese references 4-44689 (February 14, 1992), 5-74108 (March 26, 1993), and 5-65957 (September 20, 1993) cited in the IDS of March 21, 2001, are after the effective U.S. filing date of November 27, 1991, of the present application, such that Japanese references 4-44689, 5-74108, and 5-65957 cited in the IDS of March 21, 2001, are

not available as references against any claims of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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